

**FREDERICK COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MINUTES
FREDERICK SENIOR CENTER
March 14, 2011**

DOA MEMBERS	DOA STAFF	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED	GUESTS
Rae Ann Butler	Kitty Devilbiss	Cristina Donahue-Taylor		Todd Johnson
David Gray, Comm	Margaret Nusbaum	Hal Ehart		Rev. Brian Scott
Millard Haines	Susan M. Ramsburg Recording Sec	Virginia Skelley		Belinda Teague-Levy
Jim Judd	Carolyn True	Stephen Wilhide		Sr Carol Durkin
Diane Julian				Lea Meyer
Carol Krimm, Alderman				Barbara Kershner Daniel
Louise Lynch				
Mary Rice				
Debra Savageau				
Robert Wannemacher				

- I. **Call to Order – Louise Lynch, Chair**, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.
- II. **Welcome & Introductions –** Louise welcomed all attendees. There were guests and DoA staff present at today's meeting. Introductions were done around the table.

- III. Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the February 14, 2011 meeting were approved with one correction. Page four, paragraph four, should read “distributed” instead of “disturbed” in that sentence. All were in favor.

At this time, the new Policy and Procedure of the Nomination Committee was reviewed for approval. Jim Judd asked that all make sure they had received the most recent version of this document. Bob Wannemacher moved to accept the P&P as the official version for the CoA. Raeann seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- IV. Commissioner’s Report** – Commissioner Gray expressed his thanks to the Department of Aging for hosting his most recent public forum. There was a very good turnout for this forum. During the forum, there was discussion about changing the venue and day for future meetings. Wednesday may be more agreeable to people who would like to attend. The local senior centers would be a comfortable option for people in the community. This would allow the forums to be held in different geographic areas of the county. There were specific questions asked regarding Transit during the forum. Belinda Teague-Levy has requested the answers from Nancy Norris from the Transit office. The next forum will be held at Winchester Hall on Friday, March 25 at 3:00 pm. Belinda urged members to attend the hearing on the Operating Budget which will be held on April 5th at Catoctin High School in Thurmont.

Alderman’s Report – Alderman Krimm was present at today’s meeting. Alderman Krimm discussed the possibility of creating a local Legacy Leaders program. She will be talking with Wesley Queen who is the lead person for the program in Annapolis. It would be a good idea to have a point person from here.

- V. Discussion with representatives of the Ministerial Association, and Religious Coalition regarding needs of their respective senior population**, Numerous representatives from local churches and non-profit organizations were present at today’s meeting to discuss senior needs in their communities. Raeann thanked them for attending and gave a brief overview of the CoA mission and purpose. An ongoing task is the search for information on unmet needs for the population this commission represents. It is difficult for members of this commission to reach people in close knit communities. The hope is that we can retrieve information from the representatives at today’s meeting which can be relayed to the BoCC during the presentation of the CoA’s annual report.

Financially affordable housing is one of the biggest obstacles for seniors locally. Many seniors are on a fixed income. Unemployment and the current economy have exacerbated the issue. Utility costs have risen as well as prescription costs and food. There is less

funding available to subsidize needy families. The Town of Emmitsburg is hoping to have additional senior affordable housing in the future by converting a portion of the St Joseph's Provincial House complex into affordable housing. They are partnered with Homes for America who is attempting to get funding from HUD.

Some seniors live alone and are isolated and neglected by their families. They are unable to care for themselves properly or consistently. Sometimes it is just general nutrition issues. Some seniors have trouble keeping track of their finances and paperwork that comes into their home. Transportation is problematic in some areas of the county. Hoarding is sometimes another issue which could lead to loss of housing. The Frederick Community Action Agency has had some funding cuts and has to restructure their services. They are no longer able to do as many home visits. Todd Johnson from FCAA has a data presentation which he will make available to the CoA. There are some very good programs available, but fewer are able to receive services due to funding cuts.

Seniors who wish to stay in their homes are not always making necessary repairs to their home. Routine maintenance is not always done due to the age or condition of the senior homeowners. Sometimes there are relatives caring for seniors who are also seniors. Seniors are sent home from the hospital with skilled medical needs and the home care is inadequate. Services are not always available or affordable by outside sources. The food that is available at food banks is not always the most nutritious for specific medical conditions which may be related to the senior population. Some family caregivers are not local and rely on churches or other organizations to help take care of their family members. Advance directives and end of life issues are also on the minds of seniors and what needs to happen to make sure their wishes are followed.

Some churches provide services for members of their congregation. Recently they are being asked to provide more services for youth and the vulnerable elderly. Churches are also getting calls from non-profits for additional aid. The churches are struggling to serve not just the elderly, but all levels of needs. There are some regional groupings of churches, but no true council of churches. The Religious Coalition is the main point of contact.

One idea to improve communication is to improve transportation to the outer fringes of the county. This would allow seniors in those areas to get to services provided only in Frederick. A book with all the vital resources would be a great idea. A good resource for seniors needing help is the 211 resource line. Many seniors are not able to access resources or information that is only available via the internet. A good way to communicate with isolated seniors is increased home visits.

Seniors are more comfortable in their home environment and may be more open to help. Many seniors are reluctant to even ask for help because they do not want to lose their independence. It would be a great idea to have a pool of volunteers who could go into the homes of seniors for periodic visits to check on their status. Mobile crisis is available for urgent mental issues. Telephone reassurance is available for phone checks. Meals on Wheels sometimes get a heads up on at risk seniors when they go into the home to deliver meals.

Silver Alert, Corp Tom Johann – The Silver Alert has been modeled after the Amber Alert. Recent local events have raised awareness of this program. Maryland borders multiple states so there are more out of state visitors to this area. Specific information needs to be in place before an alert can be established. The Silver Alert program is for missing vulnerable seniors. A diagnosis of dementia must be on record before an alert is put in place. It is put in place by the local police department. It is a great program but has its limits. It is not mandatory that it be broadcast. The media makes that determination. It has been used a couple times in Frederick County, but more frequently stateside. Not all states are required to have a silver alert program. There are no pamphlets or literature available.

The subject of protocol for seniors who may not be safe to drive was discussed. There is no specific protocol for that circumstance. Anyone can call the local MVA to report someone who is a danger while driving. It does not have to be a family member. Police officers do sometimes stop in to check on isolated vulnerable seniors.

Announcements, All –

Jim Judd has been working with Joyce Grossnickle of the County Manager's office on the advertisement for new members to the CoA. There are specific criteria in the by-laws that direct the composition of the Commission. There are percentage requirements pertaining to age, providers of services, and geographically. The advertisement for the CoA needs will be specific for someone over the age of sixty who is not a provider of senior services and preference given to those who live in Adamstown, Middletown, and/or Thurmont. Cristina Donahue-Taylor recently resigned from the commission and the committee is waiting for the official resignation of Earl Beck. This will result in four open positions to fill. The advertisement can be placed in the senior centers. The profiles that were requested and received from the commission members have been compiled. The compilation was sent to the Nominating Committee members and the Chairperson.

Rally information was made available by Louise Lynch for anyone interested at today's meeting.

Frederick County Commission on Aging
3/14/2011

VI. Adjournment, All – The meeting adjourned at 2:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Ramsburg,
Recording Secretary

Upcoming Dates:

April 21, 2011 – Health Fair at Frederick Senior Center

April 28, 2011 at 10:00am, Older Americans Month proclamation, 3rd floor of
Windchester hall